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BRITISH PROJECTS FOR THE  
RESTORATION OF THE JEWS



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**The British Palestine Committee**

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# **British Projects** for the **Restoration of the Jews**

**by**

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## British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews.

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THE interest felt by the inhabitants of the United Kingdom in Palestine goes back to a period far earlier than the union of the three kingdoms, or even the accession of a Scottish king to the throne of England. This interest may be considered contemporary with the definite acclimatization of Christianity in England, certainly with the era of the Crusades. But the Jews, the people of Palestine, did not share with the land the interest or curiosity of the people of England. English interest in the Jews belongs to a later date. It was one of the products of the Reformation and is evidenced by the remarkable popularity among all classes of Josippon, the pseudo-Josephus, which purported to narrate the post-biblical history of the Jews and was among the most widely read books in England during the second half of the sixteenth and the whole of the seventeenth century. The Puritan movement enhanced the interest which the Jews had in English eyes, and before this religious movement had culminated in the Civil War, Judaism in one or other of its senses had become almost a passion among certain classes of the people. The Hebrew language became a subject of study. Biblical names were assumed widely. The adoption of seventy, the number of the Sanhedrin, as that of the Council of State, was suggested. Even the transference of the Lord's Day to Saturday was proposed. Above all was the widespread desire to see the Jew, the Chosen People, then a *rarissima avis* in England, in the flesh. Some of the extreme Puritans actually went to the Continent

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and adopted Judaism. A Quaker, James Naylor, went so far as to announce himself the Messiah, King of the Jews. These tendencies culminated in the formal readmission of the Jews to England during the last years of the Protector. A few years later the marvellous exploits of the Jewish pseudo-Messiah, Sabbathai Zevi, once again aroused to fever heat the interest of individuals among English merchants, who, speculating whether the Millennium might not be at hand, began to consider whether they should not adopt Judaism and settle in the Holy Land, there to be at hand to welcome the Messiah.

The Jews once settled in the country, the Christian population were afforded more and more frequent opportunities for satisfying their interest and curiosity in matters Jewish. One or two unsuccessful attempts to secure their ejection, the occasional prominence of some individual Jew, the great Naturalization Bill agitation of 1753, all helped to keep the Jew well under the eye of the Englishman. This English interest in the Jews was known outside of the kingdom, for when at the end of the seventeenth century, a Dane, Holger Paulli, who believed himself to be of Jewish descent, announced himself as the forerunner of the Messiah, he relied mainly on the King of England to assist him. Another individual who was active in keeping alive the interest of the English in the Jews was the dramatist, Richard Cumberland, who created Jewish characters deliberately "thinking it high time that something should be done for a persecuted race."

These are one or two instances of English interest in Jewry picked out almost at random. There are others which might, without difficulty, also be cited. Nevertheless, the attention given to Jewish affairs by Englishmen before the dawn of the nineteenth century was, with very few exceptions, academic. Jewry as a concrete reality seldom occurred to them, and, with very rare exceptions, the connexion between the Jews and Palestine was remote from their minds. The nineteenth century, however, saw a notable change.

Napoleon, in invading Syria, had issued a proclamation promising the Holy Land to the Jews, and the restoration of the glories of Jerusalem. Napoleon's relationship with the Jews did not pass unnoticed in this country. An English translation of the proceedings of the Sanhedrin that he convened in Paris in 1807 was published contemporaneously.

Even earlier, in 1804, the Palestine Association was formed in London for the purpose of procuring and publishing information regarding the geography, the people, the climate, and the history of the Holy Land. With the opening of the nineteenth century also the missionary activities of British Christians began to gather force and momentum. The London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews was established 1809: thirteen years later it turned its attention to Palestine: the culmination of its work may be said to have been the appointment of a baptised Jew, Michael Solomon Alexander, as Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem in 1841. For twenty-eight years—from 1830 to 1858—the political emancipation of the Jew was a lively topic in English politics. In the course of the controversies and debates, the relationship between the Jews and Palestine was frequently referred to by one side or the other. Especially noticeable was a description, by James Silk Buckingham, the traveller and author, of the condition of the Jews in Palestine, in the course of the debate of 1833:—"As to those who inhabited Jerusalem, or any part of Palestine, the oppressions under which they suffered, and the degradations to which they were subject, were such as to make their abode a continued scene of suffering; and accordingly, as soon as they could possess themselves of the means of competency, or even of removal, they generally hastened with all possible speed to get away from the country and its persecutions."

The Jews had always been denoted a nation by English speakers and writers, and had, apparently without question, accepted that designation. As the nineteenth century advanced, attention was more and

more attracted to the future of the Jews as a nation, a future necessarily linked with Palestine. A subject of theological interest, their rights and disabilities for the period of a generation supplied the two parties in the state with fuel for their controversies; at the same time there grew up the question of the future of the Jews. The oppression suffered by Jews in various countries gave a practical interest to speculation about resettlement in the land of their ancestors.

Sir Moses Montefiore's numerous visits to the Holy Land, from 1827 onwards, in the course of which his zeal for a Jewish agricultural colonisation of the land steadily deepened, guided British public opinion in the same direction. Montefiore was not only an English Jew; he was also an English public man, and, as such, commanded a far wider audience than if he had been only a member—no matter how distinguished—of the Jewish community. His Palestinian policy developed gradually, and always carried with it valuable British support. His projects may in some measure have been in advance of the time—for instance his unsuccessful experiments in colonisation, and his plan of a British railway inland from Jaffa. But his efforts were not wholly failures. They sowed the seeds that have blossomed in the generation that has followed him.

Montefiore, and those who were associated with him, did not stand alone in their interest in the restoration of the Jews to Palestine. Mehemet Ali and the Powers had made the future of Palestine a practical question, and many minds to whom it would in other circumstances have had no appeal, began to turn towards it, and to consider it in connexion with the future of Jewry. Dr. M. Russell, for instance, in his "Palestine or the Holy Land," published in 1837, remarked on the recent increase in the number of the Jews in Palestine, and the longing, unchanged throughout the centuries, for the return to Palestine. In the political changes through which that part of the East was then passing, he saw a possibility of the satisfaction of the Jewish longing. Lord Lindsay,



in his "Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land," also saw the possibility in the changes of the Turkish Empire that "the Jewish race, so wonderfully preserved, may yet have another stage of national existence opened to them, may once more obtain possession of their native land, and invest it with an interest greater than it could have under any other circumstances." "The soil of Palestine," he observed, "had great agricultural possibilities, and only waits for the return of her banished children, and the application of industry, commensurate with her agricultural capabilities, to burst once more into universal luxuriance, and be all that she ever was in the days of Solomon."

Montefiore, while on his second visit to the Holy Land in 1839, met there Andrew Bonar and Robert Murray M'Cheyne, who had been sent by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to report on the condition of the Jews of Palestine. This report attracted much attention in Britain. Almost contemporary with it, and more or less as consequences, were the appointment of a British Consul at Jerusalem—Britain being the first of the Powers to have a representative there—and the address of a memorandum to the Protestant Monarchs of Europe on the subject of the restoration of the Jewish people to the land of Palestine. This memorandum, in the words of the *Times*, which printed it in full, was "dictated by the peculiar conjuncture of affairs in the East, and other striking signs of the times, reverts to the original covenant which secures that land to the descendants of Abraham, and urges upon the consideration of the Powers addressed what may be the probable line of duty on the part of Protestant Christendom to the Jewish people in the present controversy in the East."

The idea of a restoration of the Jews to Palestine evidently seized the imagination of the *Times*, for throughout the years 1839 and 1840, references to it in the columns of that journal, as well as in other periodicals, were frequent. On the 17th of August,

1840, under the heading, "Syria—Restoration of the Jews," it stated that the question was becoming one of practical politics, and that it seemed that the Government was feeling its way in that direction. It further announced that "a nobleman of the opposition" (perhaps the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, then Lord Ashley) was taking up the matter practically, and was making enquiries on the following lines:—

(1) What did the Jews think of the proposed restoration? (2) Would rich Jews go to Palestine and invest their capital in agriculture? (3) When would they be ready to go? (4) Would they go at their own expense, requiring nothing more than assurances of safety to life and property? (5) Would they consent to live under the Turkish Government, with their rights protected by the five European Powers? This article produced a letter nine days later from "An English Christian," in favour of the restoration of the Jews. The writer, after referring to the interest aroused by the Damascus affair, to the former persecutions of the Jews in England, and to the political situation in Russia, Turkey and Egypt, urged that Britain should buy Palestine for the Jews. Such a course would be more practicable even than the extinction of slavery, and an even nobler deed. Another correspondent, "F.B." reiterated that the restoration of the Jews was a matter of practical politics, and moreover very desirable, as a means of settling international disputes. Syria used to be the Jews' home; they regarded it still as such; they wanted to go back. Since the Jews had been expelled, Syria had always been a bone of contention. Whenever in the past the Jews had thought of buying Palestine, they had been deterred by the lack of guarantees that they would be secure there. But now all the Great Powers were interested in Syria, and, under such protectors, the Jews would be willing to negotiate. Such a solution would prevent trouble between England and France. Turkey and Egypt would be glad of the money. It would secure general peace. For these, and other reasons, Great Britain

should do her utmost to secure Palestine for the Jews. In the following December the occasion of an article in *Der Orient* was taken for suggesting that there was a movement in the direction of the return of the Jews to Palestine in the Jewries of the Continent. *The Times* pointed out that in Syria the Jews were already relatively more numerous than in other lands, and suggested that both Mehemet Ali and the Sultan would realize the advantages of a Jewish settlement. In conclusion *The Times* exhorted the Jews to take possession of the land saying that with the need for a Moses one would be found.

Whether or not Lord Shaftesbury was the nobleman who was conducting an enquiry into the restoration of the Jews, he was already at this time deeply interested in their future. His sympathy had led him to learn Hebrew. He was in close co-operation with Alexander McCaul, an English clergyman who had settled among the Jews of Poland, and was subsequently the first to receive the offer of the Bishopric of Jerusalem. As a family connexion of Lord Palmerston, he had easy access to that statesman, and did not fail to make use of it in the interests of his protégés. He had long cherished the belief through his reading of the Bible that the Jews would return to Palestine. According to entries in his diary, made in the course of the year 1840, he felt that everything was then ripe for the return. If the five powers of the Western World would only guarantee their security, the Jews would, he believed, return in large numbers. To assist towards that return he had prepared a scheme which he explained to Palmerston, who promised to consider it.

He noted in his diary that Palmerston was interested more in the political than in the spiritual aspects. This conversation, although in its results it fell short of the realization of Shaftesbury's hopes, was not without some effect, for, within a few weeks, Palmerston told him that he had instructed Lord Ponsonby, at Constantinople, to communicate with Reschid Pasha respecting the protection and encouragement of the

Jews in the Turkish dominions. Shaftesbury, however, did not allow the matter to rest at that point. His verbal representations were followed up by written ones, and, in September of the same year, he addressed a formal memorandum to the Foreign Secretary on "The Syrian Question," and suggested "a measure, which being adopted will, I hope, promote the development of the immense fertility of all those countries that lie between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean Sea." In his opinion the identity of the suzerain power was a matter of little consequence. That which was needed was "a competent and recognised Dominion, the establishment and execution of laws, and a government both willing and able to maintain internal peace." After emphasizing the great need of the land for an industrious population, Lord Shaftesbury mentioned the one people which, although scattered, felt the call in Palestine of inducements and hopes additional to any that might influence men and women of other nations. "If the governing power of the Syrian Provinces would promulgate equal laws and equal protection to Jew and Gentile, and confirm his decrees by accepting the Four Powers as guarantees of his engagement, to be set forth and ratified in an article of the Treaty, the way would at once be opened, confidence would be revived and prevailing throughout these regions would bring with it some of the wealth and enterprise of the world at large, and, by allaying their suspicions, call forth to the full the hidden wealth and industry of the Jewish people. . . . They have ancient reminiscences and deep affection for the land ; it is connected in their hearts with all that is bright in times past, and with all that is bright in those which are to come ; their industry and perseverance are prodigious."

Shaftesbury's representations to Palmerston led to no practical result, but although disappointed, he did not abandon his project. Fourteen years later the Near East was again the centre of political interest. Lord Clarendon was then at the Foreign Office, and Shaftesbury revived his proposals for the Foreign

Secretary's information. At the same time he communicated with Sir Moses Montefiore to ascertain what would be the attitude of representative Jews towards the scheme if it had a chance of materialising. Clarendon communicated with Lord Stratford de Redcliffe in the matter, but the approaching crisis soon absorbed the attention of both the Foreign Office and the Embassy at Constantinople, and once again the cause of the Jews in Palestine had to be set aside. Shaftesbury until the end of his life retained his deep interest in the present and future of the Jews in Palestine, and also in the welfare of the Jews in the lands of oppression. When in 1882 the work for the employment of Jews in Jerusalem, which had been inaugurated by the Finns was reorganised, and the Society for the Relief of Distressed Jews, otherwise called the Syrian Colonisation Fund formed, Shaftesbury became its first president. He himself drafted the statement of the object of the Society. "The object of this Society is to give relief and employment to Jews especially in the Holy Land, till increase of funds shall give us the means to enable them to form themselves into colonies on their own responsibility."

The appointment of a British Consul at Jerusalem in 1839 was most fortunate for the Jews of the Holy Land. In the following year the rule of Mehemet Ali in Syria and Palestine came to an end, mainly through the instrumentality of the British Fleet, under Sir Charles Napier. The Powers had been willing to permit Mehemet to retain Syria and Palestine, but his ambitions were not so easily satisfied. If he had been moderate these lands would have remained attached to Egypt, and when forty years later, Egypt and Mehemet's grandson, the Khedive Ismail, passed under British control, Palestine would, for all practical purposes, have been incorporated in the British Empire, and the Jews under British protection would have had every opportunity for which they asked. So long as Mehemet ruled in Syria and Palestine the Jews there were assured justice and protection, but, with the withdrawal of his firm hand, the land relapsed

into the old chaotic conditions under which the Jews suffered as severely as, if not more so, than any other element in the population. British policy was mainly responsible for this relapse, as also for the consequent loss of the great opportunity, forty years later, of a British Protectorate over the Jewish settlements in Palestine. These great issues were not then appreciated, but British policy in 1840 imposes upon Great Britain some moral responsibility to safeguard Jewish interests in Palestine to-day.

One incident in Mehemet Ali's difficulties in Syria was the appearance of the Blood Accusation at Damascus in 1840. The murder of a Capuchin friar, Father Tommasso, was the occasion. The evidence inculcating his Moslem servant of the murder was quite adequate; there was none, apart from that obtained under torture, to fasten it on a Jew or Jews. Nevertheless, the fanatic monks of Damascus immediately raised a Ritual Murder charge against the Jews of the city, and found little difficulty in securing the support of the Christian population. The agitation would soon have been suppressed by the authorities if it had not been for the powerful support of the French Consul, Ratli Menton, who entered wholeheartedly into the anti-Jewish campaign. The agitation, in which the Moslems joined—for the real murderer was known to be a Moslem—spread throughout Syria and Palestine, and it was only through the influence of the other consuls, prominent among whom was the British representative at Jerusalem, that the atrocities of Damascus were not repeated in other centres. In England public opinion was deeply stirred. The Jews of England appealed to the British Government. Palmerston immediately sent out instructions to the British representatives at Constantinople and Alexandria to use every effort to bring the cruelties to an end. The British Government had Parliament and the people behind them, and in the House of Commons the leader of the Opposition, Sir Robert Peel, was no less zealous than Palmerston himself in pleading the cause of the persecuted Jews

of the East. The Lord Mayor of London convened a representative and largely attended meeting, which protested against the charge that had been brought against the Jews of Damascus, and the cruelties that had been inflicted on them, and expressed its sympathy with the sufferers. The press of the country, under the leadership of *The Times*, associated themselves with Parliament and the City of London in their abhorrence of the atrocities that were being committed against the Jews of the East.

One of the immediate consequences of the Damascus affair was the issue by Palmerston of instructions to all British representatives in the Levant and Syria, placing the Jews under their special protection, and informing them that so far as non-British subjects were concerned, the Turkish Government desired its attention to be directed to any case of oppression, and had promised the British Ambassador that "it will attend to any representation which may be made to it by the Embassy, of any act of oppression practised against the Jews." The services of the British Consul at Jerusalem were required in this connexion on several occasions, notably in 1847, when he was instrumental in suppressing, in its first stage, a revival of the Blood Accusation. On another, a Russian Jew was almost murdered for having passed too close to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The British Consul intervened on his behalf. As a consequence of this, and similar incidents, Lord Aberdeen, in the name of the British Government issued specific instructions to the British Consul to undertake the protection of foreign Jews, whose own Consuls refused to act for them. There had by this time been a considerable influx of Russian Jews into Palestine, and their own government, not caring to be troubled with their affairs, declined all responsibility for them, but told them when in need of advice or of assistance, to apply to the British Consul. The British Minister at Constantinople, Sir Stratford Canning (afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe) cordially carried out the instructions of his government in this direction.

The withdrawal of Mehemet Ali from Palestine incidentally brought to an end the project for the regeneration of Palestine by Jewish hands. Montefiore had discussed with Mehemet Ali even the details, and had obtained his general agreement. This interruption did not mean, however, any diminution in British interest in the welfare of the Jews of Palestine. Montefiore, who was by now the acknowledged head of Anglo-Jewry, frequently found in it a subject of conversation with British statesmen and diplomatists, whose attitude was invariably sympathetic. Men less in the public eye entered even more thoroughly into the ideal of a Jewish regeneration of Palestine. Colonel C. H. Churchill, who had travelled much in Syria, and ultimately settled there, was quite enthusiastic in his proposals for the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Judah. He addressed himself in the furtherance of that project to Montefiore, who wisely discouraged any attempt at political action.

Both Jewish and Christian projects of Jewish colonisation in Palestine were under discussion. Montefiore's own hopes and schemes were always ready to come to fruition whenever the sun should commence to shine upon them. In all the Jewries of Europe there were movements for the alleviation of the condition of the Jews of the Holy Land. For the most part these were merely eleemosynary, not constructive; but the *Archives Israelites*, of Paris, in 1844, launched a scheme for "A European Committee for Jewish Colonisation." In England, in April of the same year, the Rev. T. Tully Crybbace held a meeting in the Hanover Square Rooms in favour of the formation of a British and Foreign Society for promoting the restoration of the Jewish nation to Palestine. The arguments in his address were to a large extent Biblical, and his attitude throughout was that of a Christian ecclesiastic. The Jews, he said, could not return to the land of their inheritance unaided. They were dependent on the stronger nations for assistance, especially in the removal of the obstacles that lay in the way of the return. England, however, was the



Power that should convey the Jews back to their land. That nation was appointed to improve the land, and to rebuild the ruins. "The believing people of England are especially called upon, and commanded, to use the appointed means for accomplishing this work of God." Apart altogether from prophecy, benevolence and generosity, the settlement of the Jewish people in Palestine was a political desideratum for England, with her great interests in India. It would be the consummation of her great religious record. The course proposed for England was to demand the surrender of the whole of Palestine, 'from the Euphrates to the Nile, and from the Mediterranean to the Desert,' from the Sultan, and the release of the Jews by the Tsar and other oppressors. The address was printed and published as the first of what was to have been a series of pamphlets. Appended to the address was a prospectus of the proposed society. Its first object was to excite interest in the British Isles and throughout the world, in the restoration of the Jews. Assistance was expected from the Continent, and from Jews in all parts. Lectures were projected in all the principal towns of the country in order to arouse public opinion, and the British Government was to be urged to protect the Jews of Palestine, and to secure their independence of Turkey. England was to free itself of the charge of blood-guiltiness in assisting the oppressors of the Jews—Crybbace was intensely anti-Turkish. England's treaty with Turkey was morally void; nevertheless compensation should be made to Turkey. A second pamphlet, in which the blessings—commercial, political and spiritual—which would accrue to England by the restoration of the Jews were to be recounted was promised, but it does not seem to have been published. The first pamphlet was addressed to the Queen, the Parliament and the People of England.

A contemporary and somewhat similar project was that of the Rev. Samuel Alexander Bradshaw, who in "A Tract for the Times, being a Plea for the Jews," also published in 1844, emphasized the duty of the

Christian states to restore the Jews to Palestine, and, as a means to this end, proposed that Parliament should grant four million pounds provided that a further million was collected by the Churches. The following year a third writer E. L. Mitford, a member of the Ceylon Civil Service, who had lived some years in Morocco and the Levant, and knew the Jewish population there, came forward with a proposal for the "re-establishment of the Jewish nation in Palestine, under British protection." "Palestine, though now barren and desolate, requires only an active and industrious population, so abundant are its natural advantages of soil and climate, to restore its original fertility. . . . The advantages derivable to England from this measure are so great, that it would almost appear that my real object was to benefit my own country, instead of advocating the cause of a proscribed and harmless race ; but so true is it . . . . that the protection afforded to this people would quickly return in blessings on England, and be felt in the wretched hearths and homes of the poor manufacturers of Manchester, Birmingham, and Glasgow." His plan was "the re-establishment of the Jewish nation in Palestine as a protected state, under the guardianship of Great Britain, during a period to be regulated by their advances towards the present state of knowledge and enlightened civilisation. Secondly, their final establishment, as an independent state, whensoever the parent institutions shall have acquired sufficient force and vigour to allow of this tutelage being withdrawn, and the national character shall be sufficiently developed, and the national spirit sufficiently recovered from its depression to allow of their governing themselves." This plan, the writer considered, "would be attended with political advantages of incalculable importance to Great Britain, tending to restore the balance of her power in the Levant, and giving her the command of a free and uninterrupted communication with her Eastern possessions. . . . The re-establishment of the Jewish nation in Palestine under British protection would

retrieve our affairs in the Levant, and place us in a commanding position from whence to check the progress of encroachment, to overawe open enemies, and, if necessary, to repel their advance ; at the same time that it would place the management of our steam communication entirely in our own hands."

Of all this group of advocates of the restoration of the Jews to Palestine with British assistance, the most important was Colonel George Gawler who had been Governor of South Australia and on his return from that colony devoted the greater part of his activity to the Jewish cause. Gawler had the advantage over his fellow-writers of being both an administrator and a colonisation expert, and with these recommendations was able to acquire a wider and more attentive audience in Jewish as well as in non-Jewish circles. In his own words, "It has happened to me, under Divine providence, to have been the local founder of the finest colony in proportion to its duration, that has ever yet appeared in the world ; and I may therefore soberly aspire to be, further, an adviser of the foundation of the most important colony that the world will perhaps ever witness—the first Jewish colony in Palestine." He put forward his proposals in 1845 in "Tranquillization of Syria and the East. Observations and Practical Suggestions in furtherance of the Establishment of Jewish Colonies in Palestine, the most sober and sensible remedy for the miseries of Asiatic Turkey." Gawler's proposals being more moderate were certainly more practical than those of his colleagues, against which he protested as "wild schemes," but like theirs, the cornerstone of his scheme was British protection. To him the tragedy of Palestine, a land now a desert, but once flowing with milk and honey and capable of a return to its former prosperity, was only less keen than the tragedy of the Jewish people. The desolation of Palestine, he said, was forcing itself on the minds of the English people, and they were beginning to look around for a remedy. The answer he gave them was, "Replenish the deserted towns and fields of

Palestine with the energetic people, whose warmest affections are rooted in the soil." In his opinion the energy of the Jewish people alone can save Palestine and the East. He proposed the gradual colonisation of Palestine by Jews, small experimental colonies being established in the first instance. (This course was in fact adopted by Jewish agencies forty years later and was the foundation on which the existing Jewish colonisation of Palestine was laid.) It was, however, essential to his scheme that Britain should undertake the protection of the colonies. He went into detail regarding the system of government which was to have been autonomous so far as local affairs were concerned and in external matters to have been under the control of the British consul acting in consultation with the Turkish representatives. The initial expenditure involved in this scheme of colonisation was to be borne by the nations that have in the past persecuted the Jews and by those who owe them a debt for the religious teachings they have received. On England in particular this obligation rests, and as evidence of the persecution the Jews suffered here in the Middle Ages, Gawler quoted Scott's "Ivanhoe." England's unselfishness for the Jews, he said, would react beneficially on the poverty prevalent in England. He proposed to divide the expenditure involved in the colonisation of Palestine into two portions : the one unavoidable, the other extraordinary. The former should be met by the Government, the latter by private subscriptions.

Gawler's proposals, or to be more exact, the suggested Jewish colonisation of Palestine was not unsympathetically received by the English press. *The Spectator* in particular approved of the suggestion which, it was pointed out, would very materially benefit not only the Jews but also Turkey, Syria, and the peoples of the land. *The Spectator* had no desire to withdraw Palestine from Turkish rule, but suggested that to safeguard the interests of the new population, England, or a Committee of European Powers, should guarantee the due performance of

the contract that would have been agreed to by the Ottoman Government and the representatives of the Jews. In the Jewish community, Gawler gained the sympathy and encouragement of *The Voice of Jacob* and of Sir Moses Montefiore whom he accompanied on his visit to the Holy Land in 1849. The disturbed condition of the Near East rendered it impossible for any practical action to be taken in furtherance of Gawler's objects at that time, but he did not permit his disappointment to turn him aside from his goal. When the region had again settled down after the Crimean War, Gawler returned to his schemes. The Palestine Society, a non-sectarian body, was formed and this developed into a Palestine Colonisation Fund, in the activities of which Jew and Christian worked side by side. The Fund succeeded so far as to obtain a statement from the Turkish minister in London, speaking on behalf of his government, that Jews were welcome to settle in all parts of the Turkish dominions, either becoming Ottoman subjects or retaining their own nationality. In the former case free grants of land would be made to them. They would for a period of twelve years be exempt from taxation and would enjoy a large measure of autonomy in all local affairs.

In 1845, there came to Palestine as British Consul, James Finn, who remained there for eighteen years, throughout which he was ever eager to befriend the Jewish population, and to shield or advise them. His sympathies with the Jewish people were shared by his wife, who still continues her altruistic work on behalf of the Jews of Jerusalem. Finn was always zealous to carry out his instructions to protect the Jews of Palestine, not only those who were British subjects, but also the Russian Jews settled there who had been discarded by their own government and told to seek the protection of Britain, as well as other Jews without a nationality, who put themselves under the protection of Great Britain. This abandonment of Russian Jews to British protection occurred in 1848, when the relations between the two empires

were exceptionally cordial. A few years earlier, the Foreign Office had instructed the Consul that "when-ever any Austrian, French, or other European Jew should be suffering under persecution or injustice, and should be repudiated by his own Consul, the English Consul might take up his case, unless the repudiating Consul, when applied to, should assign some strong and sufficient reason for objecting to that action." Finn, however, went far beyond the letter of his instructions. In co-operation with his wife, he was the first, in recent times, to afford the starving Jews of Jerusalem an opportunity of earning their daily bread by labour, unaccompanied by proselytising designs. Jews and Jewesses, who flocked to the field which had been acquired as the scene of their labour, showed how capable they were, given the opportunity, of forming a self-supporting community. "Abraham's Vineyard," as the Finn's work of charity came to be called, commenced in the most modest manner. A small piece of ground was hired, and two Jews were set to cultivate it. The work grew, and prospered so rapidly, that a larger plot was purchased after a very few years. The purchase-price amounted to £250, but so thoroughly did the Jewish workers devote themselves to its development, that the estate is now said to be worth £100,000. The work was afterwards taken over by the Syrian Colonisation Fund, or the Society for the Relief of Persecuted Jews. Its beneficent activities have continued to the present day, and Mrs. Finn, at the age of ninety-one, is still Secretary to the fund.

Finn did not stand alone among British representatives in the Near East in his sympathy with the Jews. Sir Hugh Rose, afterwards Lord Strathnairn, as Consul General in Syria, and afterwards as chargé d'affaires at Constantinople, had less opportunities, but never neglected those which came his way. Lord Ponsonby, William Young, Finn's predecessor at Jerusalem, and above all, the great Ambassador, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, all showed their deep interest in, and sympathy with, the Jews of the East,

and their willingness to help them wherever possible. In the social welfare of the Jews of Jerusalem the Finns had coadjutors in the person of a Miss Cooper, who founded and conducted for some years a school of industry for Jewish girls, and, when in 1854, the poverty in the Holy City was keen, a non-Jewish association was formed in London to aid in giving agricultural employment to the Jews.

Meanwhile, a new movement was being initiated in Palestine, partly under English auspices, Jewish and Gentile, a movement which, after many disappointments and set-backs, ultimately developed into the colonisation of Palestine, and the regeneration of the land under Jewish auspices. In 1844, Warder Cresson had been appointed United States Consul at Jerusalem. His main object in seeking the appointment was his interest in Jews and Judaism, an interest which increased so powerfully that four years later he became a Jew, adopting the name of Michael Boaz Israel. His faith in the people and the land was sufficiently strong to make him believe that the people, once they were placed upon their feet, would be well able to regenerate themselves and the land. To him the solution of the problem lay in the establishment of agricultural colonies, and to the furtherance of this policy he devoted his own means, as well as other sums which were placed at his disposal by friends and well-wishers. Sir Moses Montefiore was at the same time projecting similar undertakings, and individuals such as Meshullam, a baptised Jew born in London, had undertaken farming on their own account. Cresson's agricultural colony in the Vale of Rephaim was, however, the first practical attempt, in modern times, at the Jewish colonisation of Palestine. That he ultimately failed does not detract from the virtue of his undertaking. His failure helped to sow the seed which has produced the harvest of the present day.

In England he received encouragement from an independent committee of Jews and Christians, formed for the Jewish colonisation of Galilee. The English

committee was under the direction of Dr. Abraham Benisch and Mr. Solomon Sequerra, both prominent members of the Jewish community. The Benisch-Sequerra committee made colonial self-government in all domestic matters an essential portion of their scheme, and proposed to petition the British and Foreign Governments to influence the Porte to grant the concessions for which they asked. The non-Jewish members of this committee included John Mills, an author and Calvinistic Methodist minister, William Henry Black, the antiquary, and Sir Hugh Owen, the promoter of Welsh education and philanthropy. The same year another English Christian, A. J. H. Hollingsworth, in a pamphlet, "Remarks upon the Present Condition of the Jews in Palestine," advocated the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, partly in the interests of the British Empire in order to safeguard the overland route to India. The Jews required the help of a mighty power like England. They wished to return to Palestine, and England should use its influence at the Porte to secure them citizen rights there. The settlement of Jews in Palestine would bring great advantages to Turkey and to England. If England were to say to Turkey, "The Jews shall have Syria," the Islamic fatalism of the Turks would cause them to imagine the matter as completed. There would thus be no difficulty. There was a growing belief that if only some of the leading men among the Jews were to appeal for the restoration, all would come right. The Christians must arouse the Jews and assist them. The restoration was immediate practical politics, and must not be delayed. The restoration of the Jews was the only practical solution of the Eastern Question. The difficulties of the Holy Places could only be solved by making Jerusalem a free city governed by Jews, with Palestine under British protection. Jews all over the world must be told to prepare and be assured of England's protection. Jewry contains the elements necessary for the formation of a nation. No miracle was required to effect the first restoration. The



restoration was necessary to give dignity to Jewry. On England devolved the duty of assisting towards this restoration, if only to prove the truth of religion as revealed in the Bible, for it was England's mission to preserve the truth. Such was Hollingsworth's argument. This was not his first essay in the field, for three years earlier he had published "The Holy Land Restored ; or an Examination of the Prophetic Evidence for the Restitution of Palestine to the Jews." This pamphlet which was dedicated to the Duke of Manchester, "as a friend of the Restoration of Israel," dealt however entirely with scriptural prophecies.

One of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts's world-wide philanthropic undertakings was to offer to supply a water system for the benefit of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a very much needed improvement which has not yet been effected, for the Turkish Government refused to give permission for the undertaking, and the water supply is still almost as primitive as it was in biblical times.

The Crimean War arising out of a Graeco-Latin dispute over one of the churches of the Holy Land, necessarily directed attention to Palestine, but it discouraged larger views. This explains to a large extent the failure of the efforts of Montefiore, Gawler, and others for the regeneration of Palestine. When the effects of the Crimean War on English life and activities had passed away, however, the restoration of the Jews to Palestine again began to attract English minds. In the course of 1871, Isaac Ashe contributed a series of articles to the *Jewish Chronicle*, urging on Jews the development "of a national population sufficiently numerous and sufficiently free-spirited and self reliant to be able to assert, in due time, national independence and self-government according to the representative institutions of England." The immediate means to this end was a wide system of irrigation which would restore the ancient proverbial fertility of the land, extending its boundaries to the Euphrates on the east and the River of Egypt on the

south. Incidentally he suggested the construction of a canal to Akabah at the head of the Red Sea which would serve as an alternative to the Suez Canal and assure a second route to India and the Far East. Ashe, like his predecessors in the field, saw that this alternative road to the East through Palestine made the question of the future of the country one of paramount importance to Britain. He also recognised that it was to England's interest to have a self-supporting free Jewish people settled in the land, and, if only in her own interests, Britain ought to go far to secure that end. Ashe proposed the formation of an Anglo-Jewish Chartered Company working in co-operation with the Turkish Government.

An earnest and eloquent advocate of the restoration of the Jews to Palestine was George Eliot, who, in her Jewish novel "Daniel Deronda," published in 1876, preached in burning language and glowing terms the need and the justification for the restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land. "Revive the organic centre; let the unity of Israel which has made the growth and form of its religion be an outward reality. Looking towards a land and a polity, our dispersed people in all the ends of the earth may share the dignity of a national life which has a voice among the peoples of the East and the West—which will plant the wisdom and skill of our race so that it may be, as of old, a medium of transmission and understanding. . . . There is store of wisdom among us to found a Jewish polity, grand, simple, just, like the old—a republic where there is equality of protection, an equality which shone like a star on the forehead of our ancient community, and gave it more than the brightness of Western freedom amid the despotisms of the East. Then our race shall have an organic centre, a heart and brain to watch and guide and execute; the outraged Jew shall have a defence in the court of nations, as the outraged Englishman or American. And the world will gain as Israel gains. For there will be a community in the van of the East which carries the culture and the

sympathies of every great nation in its bosom ; there will be a land set for a halting-place of enmities, a neutral ground for the East as Belgium is for the West. Difficulties ? I know there are difficulties. But let the spirit of sublime achievement move in the great among our people, and the work will begin. . . . Who says that the history and literature of our race are dead ? Are they not as living as the history and literature of Greece and Rome, which have inspired revolutions, enkindled the thought of Europe, and made the unrighteous powers tremble ? These were an inheritance dug from the tomb. Ours is an inheritance that has never ceased to quiver in millions of human frames."

Lord Beaconsfield's novel, "Alroy," published almost half a century earlier, in 1833, is a Zionist prose epic : his hero a Jewish nationalist leader. In the words of the High Priest, the author crystallizes the Jewish ambitions. "You ask me what I wish ; my answer is, the Land of Promise. You ask me what I wish : my answer is, Jerusalem. You ask me what I wish : my answer is the Temple, all we have forfeited, all we have yearned after, all for which we have fought, our beauteous country, our holy creed, our simple manners, and our ancient customs." In "Tancred" and in "Coningsby," Lord Beaconsfield gave expression to similar hopes, and when in later years he found practical opportunities as a statesman of helping towards the attainment of the Zionist ideals he did not neglect them.

The end of the eighth decade of the nineteenth century saw a revival in non-Jewish circles in England of interest in the Jewish colonisation of Palestine which as the threatening clouds in the East of Europe broke in the Russo-Turkish War came closer to practical politics and acquired a wider circle of interest. The Palestine Exploration Fund which had been established in 1865, an offspring of the Jerusalem Literary Society founded by Consul Finn two decades earlier, directed the attention of cultured Englishmen towards Palestine. The functions of the Fund were

primarily archæological, but it was impossible for its representatives to devote themselves entirely to the past and to divorce themselves completely from the present and the future. The *Quarterly Statement* and other publications give a ready vehicle for the publication of facts and the expression of opinions on all matters Palestinian and in these publications are to be found not infrequent references to the Jews of Palestine, present and future. At meetings of the Fund speakers, Lord Shaftesbury and the Rev. Horrocks Cocks for instance, occasionally advocated the return of the Jews to the land. Lord (then Lieutenant) Kitchener, when engaged on the survey of Palestine discovered a Jewish agricultural settlement of very long standing at Pekiin, and was much interested in it. He examined the land with a view to the possibilities of its regeneration and looked forward to "the bright future that seems to be about to dawn on that land." He devoted much attention to fixing the dates of the ancient synagogues whose ruins are to be found in Galilee. Later when he dealt with contemporary conditions, he emphasized the necessity for a British Consul at Haifa not only on account of the considerable British trade at that port and at Akka (Acre), but also in view of the large number of British subjects among the Jews of Tiberias and Safed.

Of all connected with the work of the Fund the man who threw himself most enthusiastically into the cause of the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, was Colonel Claude Reignier Conder. By his pen and on the lecture platform, he did his utmost to further the cause. He wrote frequently in the Jewish as well as the general press and was ever ready to assist the work of the *Chovevê Zion*, the Jewish Society for the Re-settlement of the Jews in Palestine. As early as 1878, he showed how the land was very different from the desert it was generally depicted and that with a tolerable government and an industrious population little difficulty would be encountered in restoring its ancient prosperity. "None are better

fitted to carry out these improvements, and to direct the present population in agriculture, than the descendants of the ancient conquerors who made hewers of wood and drawers of water of the aboriginal population. The energy, industry and tact, which are so remarkable in the Jewish character, are qualities invaluable in a country whose inhabitants have sunk into fatalistic indolence." Conder entered thoroughly into the scheme of Laurence Oliphant to establish a Jewish colony in the Land of Gilead and at once placed at his disposal his unique knowledge of the land and peoples of Palestine. For the successful colonisation of Trans-Jordania, however, he considered a railway, preferably from Haifa, an absolute essential.

Fourteen years later, in the era of the *Chovevé Zion* after several promising projects had come to naught, Conder was none the less steadfast in his belief in the possibilities of the successful Jewish colonisation of Palestine. Speaking in London in 1892, he said "It has always seemed to me that the future element of prosperous colonisation is to be found among the Jews of Eastern Europe. . . . A people which has not only been able to live, but which has prospered more than the native-born population, under Russian tyranny, will not find it difficult to prosper as subjects of the Sultan. . . . It is from the oriental Jewish agricultural class, expelled from Russia for their religion, that the colonists most naturally fitted for agriculture in Syria may evidently be drawn." The previous year he pleaded the same cause in the pages of *Blackwood*. He showed that while people were doubting and discussing whether Jews could ever become successful agriculturists, the Jews themselves were engaged in producing practical evidence for the affirmative. The colonisation of Palestine by the Jews would benefit not only Turkey but also Britain, for not only are the Jews as a people friendly towards England, but the creation of a new centre of attraction would deflect from England a considerable portion if not the whole of that immigration which a party in England seemed so anxious

to avoid. Oliphant's scheme had proved impracticable in 1880, but conditions had since changed and many of the difficulties had disappeared. What was impracticable then was now possible. The only difficulty in the way of the prosperity of Palestine was misgovernment. This would have to cease if the Jews were to colonise the land. Friction with the other elements in the population could easily be avoided. A prosperous Jewish Palestine would mean another granary for England. Conder although the most enthusiastic of the band of practical archaeologists whom the Palestine Exploration Fund has produced, is not solitary among them in his sympathy with the Jewish ideals for the future of Palestine. Lord Kitchener has already been mentioned. Sir Charles Warren more than a generation ago urged the settlement of Moroccan Jews as agricultural colonists in the Holy Land and mentioned the attachment of Jews to Britain. To him the best solution of the Palestine question was to give it to the Jews, and he has remained steadfast in this opinion ever since. Sir Charles Wilson at a dinner given to him by the Maccabeans, a club of Jewish professional men, publicly announced the sympathy he had always felt in the colonisation of Palestine by the Jews.

Political unrest in Syria and Palestine, in modern times, has usually and naturally revived in the minds of statesmen and publicists the possibility of solving simultaneously the question of Palestine and the question of the Jews. This was the case a century and a quarter ago, when Napoleon entering the country from the south, marched through the length of the land. It was so forty years later at the time of Mehemet Ali. A similar solution was discussed around the years of the Crimean War. In the period of the Russo-Turkish War the question of the restoration of the Jews to Palestine again became one of practical politics. And the same is the case to-day. In 1877 an Englishman named Walker stayed for a time in Palestine, especially in the neighbourhood of Haifa.

He studied closely the possibilities of the land, testing his conclusions by the achievements of the German Templist Colony that had settled near Haifa. The results of his enquiries were published in 1881, in a volume, "The Future of Palestine as a Problem of International Politics." He had no doubt that the future of the land lay with the Jews. He called upon one or other of the Great Powers to take possession of Palestine, either by purchase or otherwise, and to hold it in trust for the Jews. He recognised that the Jews, as a people, were not at that time fitted to be entrusted with an independent government, but Christendom was so deeply in their debt that if one of the Christian Powers were to take possession of Palestine, govern it in the interests of the Jews, and train the latter in self-government, so that eventually they might attain to the dignity of a sovereign state, that debt would not be extinguished. The author, in fact, drew up and published a scheme for the administration of Palestine in the interests of the Jews.

Not many months after the date on which Walker had completed his book, and some three years before it was published, the Russo-Turkish War ended, and a Congress of the Powers assembled at Berlin. The rumour spread that Britain was about to declare a protectorate over Palestine and Syria. It gained credence on the Continent as well as in England, and the sentiments regarding Palestine to which Lord Beaconsfield had given expression in several of his writings, confirmed the belief in many who might otherwise have doubted. Whether or not Lord Beaconsfield had any intentions regarding Palestine at this time is a secret that has not yet been disclosed. The future of Palestine had no part in the diplomatic arrangements that followed the Russo-Turkish War, except that that region, in common with the whole of the Turkish Asiatic dominions, was guaranteed by Great Britain against foreign aggression.

The failure of the Berlin Congress to provide the Jews with a home in Palestine did not mean the end

of the idea even in the British non-Jewish press. Palestine and the Jews remained still a topic of interest, and the comments of leading British newspapers were seldom unsympathetic towards the Jewish ideals. *The Evening Standard*, for instance, wrote—"The possession of Palestine, and a part of Syria, by a people who have retained an indestructible nationality, while they have learnt a complete cosmopolitanism during some eighteen centuries—a nation at once European and Asiatic—Asiatic in origin, and European in education, would not be by any means a bad arrangement. It might not be impolitic on the part of the European Powers to assist in placing so influential a people in so important a position, so soon as the inevitable decay of the Turkish Power renders a change of government necessary. All the difficulties and jealousies incident to any project of 'joint occupation' would be avoided; for the Jew is, at once, of no nation and of all. No people could better solve what, before many years, must become the 'Syrian difficulty.' " *The Times* about the same time reprinted almost in full a leading article from the *Jewish Chronicle* on the Regeneration of Palestine. *The Spectator*, a few weeks later, referring to Lord Beaconsfield, said that "If he had freed the Holy Land and restored the Jews, as he might have done, instead of pottering about Roumelia and Afghanistan, he would have died Dictator." At the beginning of the year 1880, *The Spectator* contained another noteworthy article entitled "The Restoration of the Jews," in which the prospects of constituting Palestine into a Jewish state were discussed. The writer was, however, not very hopeful of the prospects of success. At the same time British organisations at work in Palestine, such as the Free Church of Scotland, noticed and recorded the rapid increase in the numbers of the Jewish population.

While publicists were writing and dreaming, others were planning to act. The best known of these was Laurence Oliphant—novelist, mystic, politician, and publicist. In his project for the



restoration of the Jews to Palestine he was no dilettante. For a time he devoted practically the whole of his energies to organising on paper a scheme, and to negotiating with those on whose co-operation the practicability of his proposals rested. Oliphant met with much sympathy and support, and the optimism which helped him along his course was well justified. The bitterness of the first disappointment at the neglect of Roumania to fulfil her promise of freedom to her Jewish subjects, gave Oliphant to hand a population well fitted to provide him with the settlers he required, and the pathetic and reiterated appeals of the persecuted Jews of Roumania to humanity, helped to create the atmosphere necessary to win for Oliphant's efforts the general sympathy which he required. His chances of success appeared excellent. He had the support of the British Government, and the sympathetic ear of the Porte. His project was unquestionably sketched in the interests of Turkey, and of no other power. He had with him the encouragement of Jew and Christian. But, in the midst of his negotiations England underwent a change of government. The Turks had not the same confidence in Gladstone as in Beaconsfield and Salisbury. Also, Oliphant's project had always been looked upon in Turkey as a British scheme, and that which had at first been its strength, later became its weakness. The proposals for the re-settlement of the Jews in Palestine were now looked upon with suspicion.

Oliphant's project was, in his own words, "To obtain a concession from the Turkish Government in the northern and more fertile half of Palestine. . . . Any amount of money can be raised upon it, owing to the belief which people have that they would be fulfilling prophecy and bringing on the end of the world. I don't know why they are so anxious for this latter event, but it makes the commercial speculation easy, as it is a combination of the financial and sentimental elements which will, I think, ensure success. And it will be a good political move for

the Government, as it will enable them to carry out reforms in Asiatic Turkey, provide money for the Porte, and by uniting the French in it, and possibly the Italians, be a powerful religious move against the Russians, who are trying to obtain a hold of the country by their pilgrims. It would also secure the Government a large religious support in this country, as even the Radicals would waive their political in favour of their religious crotchets. I also anticipate a very good subscription in America." The creation of a self-supporting Jewish settlement on a considerable scale in Palestine would, in Oliphant's opinion, have been to the advantage of Turkey, the Jews, and Britain. The success of the scheme would have shown Turkey how her empire could have been strengthened by decentralization and the grant of autonomy, how her future could have been secure without foreign interference, and how the two great desiderata, an industrious, law-abiding population and capital, could have been attracted. The advantages of a self-supporting, autonomous settlement, so far as the Jews were concerned, were so obvious as hardly to need mention. Britain with her great interests in Turkey desired only the preservation of the *status quo*, accompanied by peace and general contentment among the populations of the Empire. The course proposed by Oliphant would have tended towards such peace and contentment. Of all the provinces of Turkey, Palestine was the one whose future was of most concern to Britain. "Political events in the East have so shaped themselves, that Palestine, and especially the provinces to the east of the Jordan, owing to their geographical position, have now become the pivot upon which of necessity they must ultimately turn. Situated between the Holy Places at Jerusalem and the Asiatic frontier of Russia, between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, between Syria and Egypt, their strategic value and political importance must be apparent at a glance ; and the day is probably not far distant when it may be found that the most important interests of the British Empire may be imperilled by the neglect to

provide in time for the contingencies which are now looming in the immediate future." His proposals were in no way directed against the integrity of Turkey. As a friend of Turkey it was England's duty to assist her to carry them out.

Olipphant's scheme embraced the formation of an Ottoman Chartered Company for the colonisation of a tract of a million and a half acres in the Land of Gilead in Eastern Palestine. The immigrants from the Russian Pale of Settlement and Roumania as well as from the Turkish dominions were to become Ottoman subjects if they were not so already. The scheme would have brought into cultivation a rich tract of country, at present unproductive. "It would be a reform involving no expense to the Porte, but, on the contrary, be the means of providing it with an immediate sum of money to be derived from the sale of lands. It would prove to Europe that the Jews found greater facilities for toleration and protection in Turkey, than in some Christian countries." Olipphant who when he entered into a matter entered into it thoroughly, had carefully explored the whole of Palestine before he decided upon the Land of Gilead as the site of the proposed colony. His preparations had been fully made when he approached the Porte for a concession. In his application he was fortified by the personal support of the British Prime Minister, Lord Beaconsfield, and the Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, and was assisted in every possible manner by the British minister at Constantinople, Sir A. H. Layard, who, both as British ambassador and otherwise, always showed a living interest in the welfare of the Jews of Palestine. The French Foreign Minister, M. Waddington, also gave him much encouragement. Above all, King Edward, then Prince of Wales, looked up to throughout his life by the oppressed Jews of Eastern Europe as their friend and protector, and Prince and Princess Christian entered fully into his plans and gave him as much encouragement and support as was consistent with their position.

Oliphant's proposals at first found much favour both with the Sultan and his government. They were examined in detail by the Turkish Foreign Office and possible amendments discussed. The change of government in England, however, altered the whole aspect of affairs, and one of the most promising schemes for the regeneration of Palestine by Jewish hands, was shattered.

Prevented by circumstances from realizing his statesmanlike scheme, Oliphant was, nevertheless, enabled almost by chance to assist in the first stage of the modern Jewish colonisation of Palestine which has been in progress since the beginning of the eighties until the present day. While he was living at Haifa, a party of Roumanian Jewish colonists arrived there only to find themselves stranded, in deep distress, and miles from their destination. The agents who had been sent in advance to purchase land for them, had allowed themselves to be cheated and as a consequence the preparations which should have been made for their reception and conveyance over the last stage of their journey to their new home had been neglected. Oliphant, however, showed himself the friend in need of these wanderers. Not only did he assist them out of his own pocket and aid materially in bringing the negotiations between them and the owners of the land on which they were to settle to a satisfactory conclusion; he was also the means of bringing the colony to the notice of Europe and above all of the philanthropist-statesman, Baron Edmund de Rothschild. Thanks to a large extent to Oliphant's services Zammarin or Zichron Jacob, near Haifa, is now one of the largest and most prosperous of the numerous Jewish colonies with which the land of Palestine is studded.

The Jewish victims of the massacres in Russia as well as those who suffered cruel treatment in Roumania, found ready sympathy in the heart of Oliphant who promptly placed his services at the disposal of the Mansion House Committee for the relief of the sufferers. By that body he was com-

missioned to visit the East of Europe in order to report on the local conditions as well as to relieve distress. When he arrived in Roumania he found himself in the midst of a Jewish population that was stretching out longing arms in the direction of the Holy Land. Oliphant immediately resigned his commission and set out for Constantinople in the hope of resuming, and with more success, the negotiations that had been interrupted a year or two previously. England was, however, then still less in favour at the Porte than it had been previously. Oliphant instead of obtaining a concession for a considerable Jewish settlement in Palestine had to concentrate his attention on preventing the withdrawal of permission to individual foreign Jews to settle in the Turkish dominions. In this he had the support of the American embassy but only partially succeeded. Oliphant subsequently settled at Haifa, where he remained one of the most valuable friends the Jewish colonists had until his death while on a visit to England in 1888.

Contemporary with that of Oliphant was another well thought out scheme for the regeneration of Palestine under joint British and Jewish auspices. Edward Cazalet was a successful British industrialist with factories in Russia where he had come into contact with the Jewish population. His pity for their sufferings was equalled by a belief in their character and capacity and a desire to assist them to escape from their land of bondage. He recognised the call that Palestine has for the Jew and at the same time felt how closely that region was bound up with British interests. He first published his views on the future of Palestine in an address, subsequently issued as a pamphlet, to a workingmen's club in London in 1878. Here he drew attention to the overwhelming British interests in Palestine and urged the necessity of a British protectorate. England, he added, had always felt an interest in the welfare of the Jews and a British protectorate over Palestine would enable them to return to that land. The following

year, in an election address which he also published subsequently as a pamphlet, he developed these views. He contended that the regeneration of Syria and Palestine, prevented by Palmerston when Mehemet Ali was willing to undertake it, was both morally and politically essential to England, and could be effected only by the restoration of the Jews. To secure this England must create the conditions under which Jews would of their own accord emigrate to Syria and Palestine. The first of these conditions was the introduction of law and order under a British protectorate. The second was the undertaking of a great work such as the construction of a railway from the coast to the Euphrates Valley which would afford immediate occupation for thousands of immigrants and at the same time assure the permanence of the British protectorate. As another means of attracting and assuring a large Jewish immigration he advocated the establishment of a Jewish university in the Holy Land. "Nobody," he concluded, "who has any knowledge of the Jewish character can for a moment doubt that if the Jews were restored to their country under an English protectorate they would prove true to our nation, and that Syria would become as firmly united to England as if it were peopled by our countrymen." Cazalet pressed forward his project and gained much support for it, but the causes that ruined the equally if not more promising venture of Oliphant rendered all his efforts also nugatory. Cazalet later, very considerably modified his proposals and endeavoured to obtain from the Porte a concession for the settlement of Jews in any part of Asiatic Turkey the Government might select while he and his friends on their part undertook to devote a very considerable sum to the developement of the region. But at this time any British proposal aroused suspicion and all Cazalet's efforts came to nothing.

The failure of the great schemes of Oliphant and of Cazalet did not mean the end of British interest in the re-settlement of the Jews in Palestine, or even lead to a cessation of the flow of publications on the subject.

Interest was in fact increased by the visit of the present King, then Prince George, and his brother, Prince Albert Victor, to Jerusalem, in the spring of 1882, when they accepted the hospitality of the Chacham Bashi, or Chief Rabbi of Palestine, and participated in the Passover Festival. Two years earlier, George Nugée, a Christian clergyman, lecturing in the St. George's Hall, Langham Place, had advocated the re-settlement of the Jews in Palestine, and incidentally mentioned that he had communicated his project to George Joachim (afterwards Lord) Goschen, at the time British plenipotentiary at Constantinople, who had expressed deep interest in it. In the following year he published a pamphlet "England and the Jews : Their destiny and her duty," in which he advocated the return of the Jews to Palestine under British auspices. Later in the same year, Henry Wentworth Monk, feeling that the responsibility for the sufferings of the Jews of Eastern Europe rested on Christendom, and that so long as the Jews remained in Russia and Roumania, there could be no hope for them, himself approached Goschen asking him to suggest to the Turkish Government the neutralisation of Palestine under the joint protectorate of the Powers, in return for a money payment to the Porte. Monk looked forward to the formation of an Anglo-Jewish West Asian Company which, following on the lines of the East Indian Company would, with the help of Jewish settlers, develop Palestine, and ultimately assume the leadership of the Jewish people. Three years later, Samuel Alexander Bradshaw, who had been active for the cause in the forties, published a new pamphlet, "The Trumpet Voice. Modus Operandi in Political, Social, and Moral Forecast concerning the East," wherein amid mystical rhapsodies he stated that Jews have an inalienable heritage which must eventually return to them, and at the same time, that a fresh field for commercial enterprise was needed to relieve the social misery which prevailed. This would best be done by allowing the Jews to regenerate Palestine. To further this end England should annex Palestine

to Egypt. Israel's return to Palestine would prove a bond of solidarity between the nations. For the material means of regeneration he expected to find twenty or more millionaires, each of whom would devote half a million pounds to the object, in order to discharge his responsibilities on earth.

In the meanwhile the forces in Jewry that longed for the return to the Holy Land were gathering together, and were organising themselves for the attainment of their goal. The massacres in Russia, and the still more oppressive economic and social persecution that accompanied them, together with the cynical disregard by Roumania of the terms of the treaty that had constituted her a kingdom, had made many despair of the Jewish future in those countries, and had turned their eyes in the direction of some other solution than that of local emancipation. This other solution always took the form of emigration, sometimes accompanied by an autonomous government in the new land. In this manner grew up the *Chovevé Zion*, or Lovers of Zion, Movement, and afterwards the Zionist Movement, initiated by Theodore Herzl. Both were directed towards the colonisation of the Holy Land, and the latter looked to the creation of a self-governing Jewish society there. Both movements received much encouragement in non-Jewish circles in England. The British Government, although it formally adopted neither, was always ready to use its influence on behalf of both, except in the political field. Whenever difficulties were placed by the Turkish Government in the way of Jewish immigration into or settlement in Palestine, the British Government needed little urging to make representations on behalf of the Jews. In 1887 when Turkey, alarmed by the boast of the Russian Consul that he had more "subjects" in Jerusalem than those of all the other consuls combined, introduced new regulations limiting to one month the stay of foreign Jews in Palestine, the British Government joined the Governments of the United States and France in protesting against the regulations, and succeeded in getting them abrogated. Four years



later when a renewed pogrom campaign in Russia rendered a refuge for the terror-stricken fugitives imperative, the *Chovevé Zion* of England petitioned the Porte not to hinder the settlement of foreign Jews in Palestine. The petition was strongly supported by the Foreign Minister (Lord Salisbury) and the British Ambassador (Sir William White), through whom it was forwarded. The next Foreign Secretary (Lord Rosebery) supported it as earnestly as had done his predecessor. The petition of the *Chovevé Zion*, backed by the British and United States Governments, was granted. Among the distinguished Englishmen who in their private capacity supported the *Chovevé Zion* by word of mouth and by pen, were the late Duke of Argyll, the late Duke of Abercorn, Father Ignatius, and Mr. Hall Caine. In the same period, but independent of the *Chovevé Zion*, falls the visit to Palestine of R. Scott Moncrieff, who had been sent there on a mission by the Society for the Relief of Persecuted Jews, to inquire into the conditions of the Jews in Palestine, and the measures necessary for their relief and employment. The immediate occasion for the mission was the influx of Russo-Jewish refugees. Outside of the *Chovevé Zion* also were the proposals of the eminent painter, William Holman Hunt, who when engaged on his biblical pictures half a century earlier, had spent much time in Palestine, and among the Jews of that land. He foresaw that in the absence of steps to safeguard the future of Syria and Palestine, that region would become a cause of friction and dissension among the Powers, and might lead to that Armageddon which all the Powers were desirous of avoiding. England, he urged, could not, either in her own interests or in those of Egypt, ever consent to the land passing under the control of any other great power. Holman Hunt also felt the need of a land of refuge for the victims of Christian persecution, and a Jewish state on the flank of Egypt would mean no menace to the British Empire even at its weakest link. Holman Hunt, however, advocated no conquest. Palestine in its widest limits, he thought,

should be purchased from the Porte. Turkey could not refuse to sell, once the Powers were united in the matter, and if the Powers were not united and the offer were rejected, still nothing but good could result. "The fact would go forth that the 'promised seed' had claimed their own, and were awaiting the award of justice. The sentiment throughout the world is so intensely strong in favour of this dream of ages that every hour its advocates would increase. It would unite people divided by discord."

Almost simultaneously with the appeal of Holman Hunt came the call of Theodore Herzl out of which the Zionist Movement sprang. Herzl immediately found sympathisers in England. Holman Hunt and those who had already given in their adhesion to the *Chovevé Zion* were ready awaiting him. Others soon joined them. Politicians, publicists, writers, and other men of affairs signified their sympathy with the Zionist ideal. The *Daily Chronicle* and the *Pall Mall Gazette* definitely accepted the Zionist Programme and called for a conference of the Powers to consider it. Other leading periodicals placed their columns willingly at the disposal of sympathisers. The most important converts Herzl made in England were, however, the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, and the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord Percy. Unexpected difficulties having arisen in the direct way of the Palestinian goal, the Zionist leaders looked towards the El Arish district in Egyptian Palestine as a place of Jewish autonomous settlement. Both the Foreign Office and the Anglo-Egyptian Government showed themselves in general agreement with the proposal and a joint commission was sent out to investigate the country and to report on its suitability for colonisation. The report of the Commission was never published and the colonisation project was not pursued. The El Arish proposals, however, led directly to an offer that marked an epoch in the history of Zionism.

Joseph Chamberlain had been acquainted with the El Arish project and had taken much interest in it. Its failure came to him as a disappointment, which was still fresh in his mind when on the way to visit the South African colonies, he traversed British East Africa in order to pay a flying visit to Uganda. A portion of the East African territory appeared to him an ideal place of settlement for a European race. Moreover, it was practically uninhabited. Its suitability as a Jewish land immediately occurred to him. British East Africa at that time was in the province of the Foreign Office and the translation of his idea into action did not therefore fall to Chamberlain. He, however, communicated it at the first opportunity to Lord Lansdowne and Lord Percy and by them it was received with as much sympathy as Chamberlain himself had given to it. Negotiations were opened with the Zionist Organization and in a letter from the Foreign Office it was stated that Lord Lansdowne had "studied the question with the interest which His Majesty's Government must always take in any well-considered scheme for the amelioration of the position of the Jewish race." The letter proceeded to lay down the main features of the scheme. They were "the grant of a considerable tract of land, the appointment of a Jewish official as the chief of the local administration, and permission to the colony to have a free hand in regard to municipal legislation, and as to the management of religious and purely domestic matters, such local autonomy being conditional upon the right of His Majesty's Government to exercise general control." East Africa lay outside the domain of the Zionist Organization and the Zionist leaders had not the authority to accept the offer. It proved, however, the deep sympathy felt by the British cabinet in general and the Foreign Office in particular with the ideal of a Jewish state, a sympathy that was proved again by Chamberlain's successor, Alfred Lyttelton, who two years later renewed to the Jewish Territorial Organization which had in the meanwhile been formed

to bring into existence a Jewish autonomous state, not necessarily in Palestine, the assurance that the British Government followed with the same interest every attempt to ameliorate the condition of the Jewish people. In this matter it cannot be said that the government is in advance of the people. Projects for the welfare of the Jewish people always find a ready hearing and sympathy. The English press is seldom closed to a communication dealing with the future of the Jews or of Palestine and when a book on the subject appears it is noticed by periodicals published in every quarter of the kindgom. "Zionism and the Jewish Future," a recent work which deals with the problem of Judaism and the Jews and its solution in Palestine, was reviewed in periodicals of all classes, and without exception, the notices, which included Lord Cromer's lengthy analysis in the *Spectator*, were friendly and sympathetic.





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